

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FOLG RECD AS MADRAS 0045 DTD JAN 8 1976 RPTD YOUR INFO:

QUOTE:

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: TAMIL MATINEE IDOL SHIVAJI GANESAN BOOSTS PRO-MERGER FORCES IN TNCC(O)

1. THE PRO-MERGER SECTION OF THE TAMIL NADU CONGRESS (O) RECEIVED A BIG BOOST WHEN TAMIL MATINEE IDOL SHIVAJI GANESAN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO JOIN THE PRO-MERGER CONGRESS (O) AT A MADRAS PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 5. GANESAN HAD CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER GANDHI IN DELHI ON JANUARY 2 AND APPRISED HER OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION PREVAILING IN TAMIL NADU. GANESAN STATED THAT HE EXPECTED AT LEAST 75 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL 200,000 MEMBERS OF HIS 15,000 FAN CLUBS IN TAMIL NADU TO JOIN THE REUNITED CONGRESS.

2. AT A MEETING OF THE PRO-MERGER TNCC (O) HELD IN MADRAS JANUARY 7 SEVERAL LEADERS EMPHASISED THAT A REUNION OF THE TWO CONGRESS PARTIES IS IMPERATIVE TO FIGHT REACTIONARY AND SEPARATIST FORCES AND TO SAVE THE NATION AND DEMOCRACY. ACCORDING
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TO MADRAS INDIAN EXPRESS JANUARY 8 THE PRO-MERGER LEADERS ALSO

STRESSED THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE UNDIVIDED TNCC (O) IN FEBRUARY 1975 THAT THE PARTY SHOULD NOT ALIGN WITH THE DMK OR THE ADMK NOR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ANY PARTY WHICH ALIGNED WITH THE DMK OR THE ADMK. THEY DESCRIBED BOTH THE DMK AND THE ADMK AS "NOT NATIONAL." B. MAHADEVAN PILLAI, PRESIDENT OF PRO-MERGER TNCC(O), ANNOUNCED AT THE MEETING THAT HE HAS NOMINATED SHIVAJI GANESAN AS A MEMBER OF THE PARTY'S WORKING COMMITTEE AND THE PCC. PILLAI APPEALED TO THE GOI NOT TO EXTEND THE TERM OF THE TAMIL NADU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DUE TO EXPIRE IN MARCH.

3. COMMENT: GANESAN , WHO HAS SUBSTANTIAL MASS APPEAL, IS EXPECTED TO HELP STRENGTHEN A REUNITED CONGRESS PARTY AND WEAKEN THE DMK, WHICH HAS BEEN HOPING TO KEEP THE TNCC(O) AS AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ENTITY. WE ARE TOLD THAT SOME OF THE UNCOMMITTED TNCC(O) LEADERS AND WORKERS WHO WERE HITHERTO KEEPING ALOOF FROM THE SPLIT ARE NOW VEERING ROUND IN FAVOR OF MERGER FOLLOWING GANESAN'S DECISION. GANESAN'S ENTRY INTO A REUNITED CONGRESS MAY ALSO HAVE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE PROSPECTS FOR AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE CONGRESS URD THE ADMK, LED BY ANOTHER MATINEE IDOL, M.G. RAMACHANDRAN. (MGR). WITH GANESAN'S ENTRY, A REUNITED CONGRESS AND THE ADMK TOGETHER WOULD HAVE MUCH BETTER PROSPECTS OF DEFEATING THE DMK WHEN ELECTIONS ARE HELD. BUT RELATIONS BETWEEN GANESAN AND MGR ARE NOT CORDIAL. IN ADDITION, RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS BY ADMK LEADERS INDICATE THAT THE ADMK IS PREPARED FOR AN ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WITH OTHER PARTIES PROVIDED THE ADMK GETS A MAJORITY OF SEATS FOR ITSELF AS A RESULT OF SUCH ALLIANCE, AND IT IS DOUBTFUL CONGRESS WOULD AGREE TO SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT. THIS RIVALRY BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE ADMK, BOTH CONTENDING FOR POWER, MAY IN FACT HELP THE DMK, AND WITH GANESAN'S ENTRY INTO THE CONGRESS, IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THAT THERE WILL NOW BE THREE MAJOR CONTENDERS FOR POWER IN TAMIL NADU - A REUNITED CONGRESS, THE DMK AND THE ADMK. EAVES UNQUOTE.

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